

## Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 TOKYO 03727 180240Z  
ACTION OES-06

INFO OCT-01 EA-09 ISO-00 FEA-01 AID-05 CEQ-01 CIAE-00  
ERDA-07 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-08 EPA-04 INR-07 IO-13  
L-03 NSF-02 NSC-05 NSAE-00 PM-04 USIA-15 SS-15 SP-02  
INT-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00 PA-02 PRS-01 /117 W  
-----180252Z 099332 /20

R 170660Z MAR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6196

UNCLAS TOKYO 3727

DEPT PASS TO EPA AND CEQ

FOR OES/ENP/EN

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: SENV, JA  
SUBJECT: NITROGEN OXIDE EMISSION CONTROL

REF: TOKYO 3641

1. SUMMARY: AS HAS BEEN THE CASE WITH THE IMPACT ASSESSMENT  
ISSUE, THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY (EA) AND THE MINISTRY OF  
INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND INDUSTRY (MITI) HAVE BEEN AT LOGGERHEADS  
WITH EACH OTHER OVER THE QUESTION OF WHETHER EXISTING REGULATIONS  
ON NITROGEN OXIDE EMISSION CONTROL SHOULD BE MADE MORE STRINGENT.  
TWO EA SURVEYS ON NOX HAVE ADDED FUEL TO CONTROVERSY: ONE  
RELATED TO HEALTH EFFECTS OF COMBINED AIR POLLUTANTS AND THE  
OTHER ASSESSING PROGRESS IN DENITRIFICATION TECHNOLOGY. END  
SUMMARY.

2. MICHIO HASHIMOTO, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, AIR QUALITY BUREAU, EA,  
INDICATED IN DIET RECENTLY THAT PHASE-THREE EMISSION STANDARDS  
FOR NITROGEN OXIDES TO BE ANNOUNCED SHORTLY WILL BE VERY STRINGENT  
FOR LARGE FACILITIES, THAT STANDARDS WILL BE APPLIED ALSO TO  
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PAGE 02 TOKYO 03727 180240Z

NEWLY INSTALLED FACILITIES, AND THAT THE SCOPE OF APPLICATION  
WILL BE EXPANDED. HASHIMOTO'S REMARKS WERE FAR FROM SPECIFIC,  
PARTICULARLY CONCERNING THE RATE OF REDUCTION, BUT THEY WERE  
INDICATIVE OF EA'S STRICT POSTURE IN DEALING WITH NOX QUESTION.

3. BEHIND EA'S POSTURE WERE TWO RECENT DEVELOPMENTS. ONE WAS

THE ANNOUNCEMENT ON THE OUTCOME OF SURVEY ON HEALTH EFFECTS OF COMBINED AIR POLLUTANTS. THE SURVEY WAS CONDUCTED FOR FIVE YEARS FORM JFY 1970 TO FJY 1974 IN SIX REGIONS TO INVESTIGATE CORRELATIONS BETWEEN AIR POLLUTANTS INCLUDING SULFUR DIOXIDE AND NITROGEN DIOXIDE AND SYMPTOMS OF RESPIRATORY DISEASES. THE JFY 1974 DATA RECEIVED SPECIAL ATTENTION BECAUSE THEY SHOWED QTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIPS UNQTE BETWEEN NITROGEN OXIDES AND SYMPTOMS OF RESPIRATORY ALIMENTS SUCH AS SUSTAINED COUGH AND PHLEGM. THE OTHER DEVELOPMENT WAS PUBLICATION OF REPORT VERIFYING STEADY PROGRESS BEING MADE BY JAPANESE INDUSTRY IN STACK GAS DENITRIFICATION TECHNOLOGY. THE REPORT STATED THAT TECHNOLOGY FOR DENITRIFYING EMISSIONS FROM HEAVY OIL CONSUMING BOILERS,

IF NOT TECHNOLOGIES FOR DENITRIFYING EMISSIONS FROM SINTERING FURNACES AND GLASS MELTING FURNACES, HAS NOW REACHED THE STAGE OF PRACTICAL APPLICATION. THE REPORT ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE COSTS OF DENITRIFICATION EQUIPMENT AND ITS OPERATION HAVE BEEN ALMOST HALVED COMPARED WITH 1975 ESTIMATES. (IN 1975, A 100,000 NORMAL CUBIC METER/HOUR DRY DENITRIFICATION FACILITY WAS ESTIMATED TO COST FROM YEN 420 MILLION TO 1,300 MILLION. IN 1977, THE COST HAS BEEN REDUCED TO RANGE OF YEN 300 MILLION TO YEN 700 MILLION).

4. THESE FINDINGS HAVE EMBOLDENED EA'S AIR QUALITY BUREAU OFFICIALS BUT PUT INDUSTRY IN QUANDARY. BOTH INDUSTRY AND MITI, WHICH BACKS INDUSTRY ON ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS, FIND FAULTS WITH THESE FINDINGS. THEY CONSIDER THE FINDING UNREALIABLE AND EXAGGERATED. MITI POINTED OUT THAT THE 1974 DATA ALONE ARE NOT SUFFICIENT TO ESTABLISH CORRELATIONS BETWEEN NOX POLLUTION AND HEALTH DAMAGES; WHAT ARE NEEDED ARE DATA COVERING A LONGER PERIOD. AS FOR NOX CONTROL TECHNOLOGY, MITI ASSERTS THAT DENITRIFICATION

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 TOKYO 03727 180240Z

FACILITIES NOW IN OPERATION ARE NOT ADEQUATE FOR REMOVING SULFUR OXIDES. THE ANNOUNCED COSTS OF DENITRIFICATION FACILITY AND ITS OPERATION ARE ALSO UNDER ESTIMATED, ACCORDING TO INDUSTRY AND MITI. THEY CLAIM THAT THE REDUCED COSTS ARE SIMPLY BASED ON COMPARISON BETWEEN THE MOST EXPENSIVE FACILITY A YEAR AGO AND THE MOST EXPENSIVE FACILITY A YEAR LATER. THE AVERAGE RATES OF COST REDUCTION FOR FACILITY AND OPRATION ARE 30 PER CENT AND 40 PER CENT RESPECTIVELY. MITI'S MOTIVE IN FINDING FAULTS WITH THESE SURVEYS APPARENTLY IS TO THWART EA'S ATTEMPT AT MAKING IT MANDATORY FOR INDUSTRY TO INSTALL STACK GAS DENITRIFICATION FACILITIES IN THEIR PLANTS UNDER THE THIRD PHASE NOX CONTROL PROGRAM.

BUTTON

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NNN

\*\*\* Current Handling Restrictions \*\*\* n/a

\*\*\* Current Classification \*\*\* UNCLASSIFIED

## Message Attributes

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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
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22 May 2009  
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